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## THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE

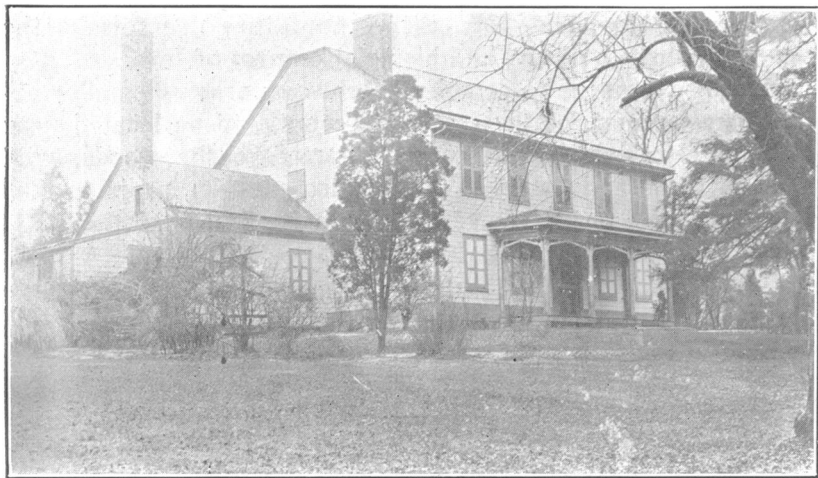
*THE NORTHUMBERLAND  
HOUSE OF JOSEPH  
PRIESTLEY*

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, born in Yorkshire in 1733, was by profession a dissenting clergyman and carried on his work in science as an amateur. He was led in part by association with Franklin to take up the writing of a history of electricity and to make original experiments in connection with this work, in recognition of which he was elected to the Royal Society and awarded its Copley medal. His remarkable work on gases was carried on while he was acting as a unitarian clergyman at Leeds and Birmingham. He not only discovered oxygen, but also sulphuric and muriatic acid, and did much to enlarge knowledge concerning the properties of oxygen, nitrogen and other gases.

Priestley was not only a liberal in religion, opposed to a state church, but advocated democratic principles

of government, with freedom of thought and liberty of discussion. At the time of the French revolution he was made a citizen of France and a member of the assembly. This led to persecution at home, and on the anniversary of the French revolution, in 1791, there was a riot in Birmingham, in which his meeting house and dwelling were burned, and his manuscripts, library and apparatus destroyed. He was even obliged to withdraw from the Royal Society.

Under these conditions Priestley sought freedom in the United States where his sons had already preceded him. Arriving here in 1794, he was received with distinguished consideration by Jefferson and others, the American Philosophical Society presented him with a complimentary address and the University of Pennsylvania offered him a professorship of chemistry. It is said, however, that the alien and sedition law of the Adams administration was



THE PRIESTLEY HOUSE AT NORTHUMBERLAND.



THE PRIESTLEY HOUSE.

passed with some reference to him, and Mr. Adams warned him to abstain from saying anything on politics lest he should get into difficulties.

Priestly retired to Northumberland on the Susquehanna river one hundred and thirty miles from Philadelphia, where the house shown in the accompanying illustrations, gave him a library and laboratory. There he worked until his death in 1801.

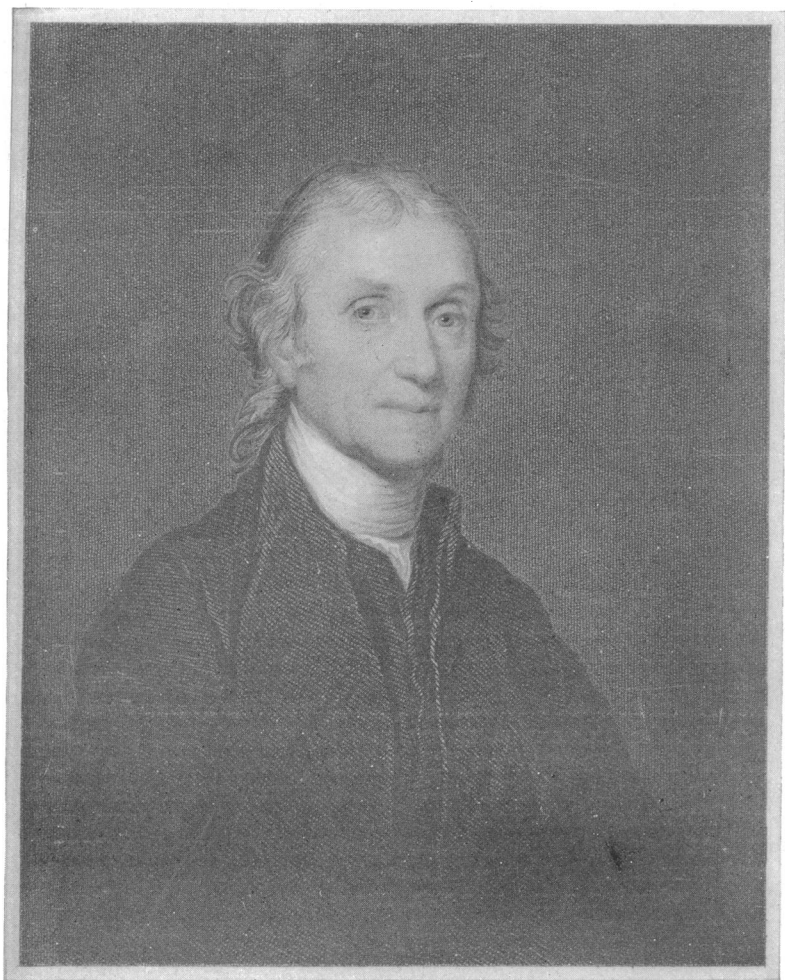
This Priestley homestead was purchased recently by graduate students of the Pennsylvania State College, who plan to move it to the campus and make it a lasting memorial. Upon learning that the house which was built in 1794-1796, was to be put up at public auction, the Penn State chemists sent as their representative to the sale Dr. G. G. Pond, dean of the School of Natural Science at the college. He was successful in making the purchase, and the historic mansion will be preserved.

Architects from the college will make the necessary surveys preparatory to the work of moving the Priestley house to the campus at State College. The house is of frame, and painting has kept the

woodwork in a remarkable state of preservation, so that it may be possible to rebuild the greater part of the structure from the present lumber. Immense pine timbers used in the framework are as good as new and the old-fashioned interior decorations—arched doorways, fireplaces and stairway—are in such condition that they can be removed and replaced with comparative ease.

While the purchase of the house has been made for the Penn State chemistry alumni, who are scattered to all parts of the country, funds for its removal and erection on the college campus will be supplied by an as yet unnamed donor. Actual work of removal will probably be started soon. Northumberland is about sixty miles from State College, at the intersection of the north and west branches of the Susquehanna.

The reconstruction on the college campus will be along the old architectural lines, but modernized and adapted to some suitable use by the school of Natural Science, according to present plans. The house is an old landmark in Northumberland county, and can be seen on the



JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

outskirts of the town from trains on the Pennsylvania Railroad passing Northumberland. It is a two-story structure, with capacious attic space. It is about  $45 \times 50$  feet, with a projection at each end about 25 feet square. One of these was the kitchen and the other the workshop, or laboratory, in which Priestley pursued his scientific study and experiments.

**THE WORK IN INDUSTRIAL  
CHEMISTRY OF THE AMERICAN  
CHEMICAL SOCIETY**

A GROUP of chemists met at Northumberland in 1874 to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the discovery of oxygen by Priestley and from this meeting the American Chemical Society had its origin. The society, which now has some 14,000 members and publishes three